

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 19-21, 25, 34, 35, 38-40, 44, 48, 49, 58, 59, 64-66, 70, 71, 74, 75, 80 and 83-88 are currently being cancelled.

Claims 24, 26, 29, 30, 33, 41, 45, 50-54, 60, 67, 79, 81, 89, 96 and 102 are currently being amended. None of the amendments to these claims affects the scope of these claims.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment cancels and amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 22-24, 26-33, 36, 37, 41-43, 45-47, 50-57, 60-63, 67-69, 72, 73, 76-79, 81, 82 and 89-117 are now pending in this application.

Applicants appreciate the indication in the Office Action that claims 22-24, 27, 28, 32, 33, 36, 37, 41-43, 45-47, 50-57, 60-63, 67, 68, 72, 73, 76-79 and 89-117 are allowed, as well as the indication in the Office Action that claims 26, 29-31, 69, 81 and 82 would be allowed if amended to place those claims in independent form. By way of this amendment and reply, claims 26, 29, 30, 69 and 81 have each been placed in independent form to include the features of their respective base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, presently pending claims 26, 29-31, 69, 81 and 82 are now in allowable form (claim 31 depends from claim 26, and claim 82 depends from claim 81).

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner notes that the references noted in the specification does not constitute a proper Information Disclosure Statement (IDS). Accordingly, an Information Disclosure Statement is being filed concurrently herewith, to include all of the references cited in the specification.

Please note that a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) is also being filed concurrently herewith, so that the IDS can be properly considered by the PTO.

In the Office Action, claims 24, 33, 36, 41, 45, 50-54, 96 and 102 were objected to because of informalities noted on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action. With respect to presently pending claims 24, 33, 36, 41, 45, 50-54, 96 and 102, these claims have been amended in order to overcome the objection to these claims (note that the scope of these claims has been unaffected).

In the Office Action, claims 19-21, 25, 34, 38-40, 44, 48, 49, 58, 59, 64-66, 70, 71, 74, 75, 80 and 83-88 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,590,674 to Eppenbach. Due to the cancellation of claims 19-21, 25, 34, 38-40, 44, 48, 49, 58, 59, 64-66, 70, 71, 74, 75, 80 and 83-88, this rejection has been rendered moot.

Since there are no other objections or rejections raised in the Office Action, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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